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3-21-2014

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**Peter Bell to Serve as 2014 Commencement Speaker**

*Summary: Bell is a distinguished author and community leader and former member of the University of Minnesota Board of Regents.*

(March 21, 2014)-Peter Bell, distinguished author and community leader and former member of the University of Minnesota Board of Regents, will serve as the 2014 Commencement speaker at the University of Minnesota, Morris. This will mark the University's 51st commencement exercise.

Bell is the former chair of the Twin Cities' Metropolitan Council, a cabinet-level position appointed by the governor of Minnesota. Prior to his position at the Metropolitan Council, he was executive vice president of Publishing & Educational Services at the Hazelden Foundation, an internationally renowned nonprofit that provides a wide range of alcohol and drug-abuse services. Before coming to Hazelden, Bell was cofounder and executive director of the Institute on Black Chemical Abuse. He was appointed to serve on a commission to the White House Conference on a Drug-Free America and to a congressionally created national commission on drug-free schools. Bell has traveled extensively both in the United States and abroad, providing seminars on alcohol and drug abuse. He has written numerous books on chemical dependence and was named ABC Evening News Person of the Week in 1989.

In addition to his work in chemical dependence, Bell served for five years as executive vice president of corporate community relations of TCF Financial Corporation. He has or currently serves on the board of directors of numerous local and national social, civic, and business organizations, including TCF Bank, The Citizens League, Center of the American Experiment, CommonBond, and TCRISE! and was a founding member and chair of the Center for New Black Leadership. Bell was appointed to the University of Minnesota Board of Regents in the fall of 2002 and to the transition teams for Governor Jesse Ventura, Governor Tim Pawlenty, and Mayor Betsy Hodges. He currently serves as a member of the advisory council of the University of Minnesota's Humphrey School of Public Affairs, appears frequently on the editorial pages of the Minneapolis Star Tribune, and provides commentary for Almanac, a statewide public affairs television program.

"I am honored that Mr. Bell has accepted our invitation to serve as this year's commencement speaker," says Chancellor Jacqueline R. Johnson. "His longstanding service to the public, his role as a civic and community leader in the Twin Cities and the state, and his intellectual contributions as a thought leader on a variety of social and political issues make him an especially appropriate choice for us."

Morris's 51st Commencement will be held on Saturday, May 10, 2014, at 1:30 p.m. on the campus mall. The public is invited to attend Bell's speech, to watch the event streamed online at [morris.umn.edu](http://morris.umn.edu), or to listen to the address on KKOK radio. Additional information is available at [morris.umn.edu/commencement](http://morris.umn.edu/commencement).

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